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Georges R. Harik

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EXAMINER

SPOONER, LAMONT M

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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/697,333	Applicant(s) HARIK ET AL.	
	Examiner LAMONT M. SPOONER	Art Unit 2626	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 January 2008.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9-19,21,22,24-32,41,43 and 44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-7,9-19,21,22,24-32,41,43 and 44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 October 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Introduction

1. This office action is in response the applicant's submission dated 1/31/08. Claims 1-7, 9-19, 21, 22, 24-32, 41, 43 and 44 are currently pending and have been examined.
2. Applicant's arguments, see remarks, filed 1/31/08, with respect to the rejection(s) of the claim(s) have been fully considered and are persuasive (based upon the amendments). Therefore, the rejections have been withdrawn. However, upon further consideration, a new ground(s) of rejection is made in view of Shanahan in view of Fernley and further in view of Veale, see rejections below.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 1-7, 12-19, 21, 22, 24-32 and 43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shanahan et al. (US 6,820,075) in view of Fernley et al. (Fernley, US 2002/0174101).

As per **claim 1**, Shanahan teaches a method comprising:

- obtaining a text fragment (C.54 lines 42-51);
- performing a search, based, at least in part, on the text fragment, to identify one or more documents (ibid, C.54 lines 38-41-his meta-document(s), C.55 lines 15-22, C.60 lines 45-57);
- identifying sentences within the one or more documents that include the text fragment (ibid, C.54 lines 64-67, C.60-lines 9-57-his first word/match phrase and further completion of the fragment to the end of his sentence, wherein the sentence is identified for presentation, C.55 lines 61-65);
- determining sentence endings as text that is located within the identified sentences between the text fragment and an end of the identified sentences (ibid, inherent to the identified ending of the first/match phrase and the rest of the text up to the end of the sentence); and
- presenting the sentence endings as potential completions for the text fragment (ibid, C.54 lines 42-51).

Shanahan lacks explicitly teaching assigning scores to the sentences based, at least in part, on a location within the identified sentences at which

the text fragment occurs; and presenting the sentence endings as potential completions for the text fragment based, at least in part, on the scores.

However, Fernley teaches assigning scores to the sentences based, at least in part, on a location within the identified sentences at which the text fragment occurs; and presenting the sentence endings as potential completions for the text fragment based, at least in part, on the scores (Fig. 2-his nodes representing Query, and nodes representing Documents, and rankings, see also [0056, 0068, 0075, 0076] wherein Fernley explicitly teaches scoring the sentences, based upon location of the text fragment relative to position within the sentence, and each word in the document is given a score based on relative position). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences, providing the benefit of positional analysis for information retrieval (Fernley, [0068]).

As per **claim 2**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the text fragment includes a phrase (Fig. 47 item 4704 item 4704, his "Dig").

As per **claim 3**, and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the obtaining of a text fragment includes receiving the text fragment from a user (C.54 lines 42-51).

As per **claim 4**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the obtaining a text fragment includes automatically detecting the text fragment (C.54 lines 42-51, C.55 lines 6-14).

As per **claim 5**, and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the performing a search includes searching for documents that include the text fragment as a phrase (see claim 1, also C.54 lines 52-63, C.55 lines 61-65).

As per **claim 6**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches wherein the performing a search includes searching for documents that include the text fragment and synonyms of one or more words within the text fragment (C.33 lines 42-47, Fig. 45 items 4508, 4510-his “enriched updated document content” includes annotated synonyms, and his auto-completion a based on his enriched information space/document).

As per **claim 7**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan lacks explicitly teaching:

determining whether a number of the one or more documents is less than a threshold;

shortening the text fragment when the number of the one or more documents is less than the threshold; and

performing a search, based, at least in part, on the shortened text fragment, to identify a set of documents.

However, the Examiner notes, that at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art, that during an auto-completion mode, if there were less than a threshold of document results, shortening the text fragment would increase the search results (for example ...the search string “therapeutically” would return less documents than “ther” wherein the additional characters of the former limit the search. Therefore it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art, at the time of the invention to modify Shanahan with shortening the search text fragment, thus providing the inherent and natural benefit of increasing results as applied to search strings, as understood in the art.

As per **claim 12**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the identifying sentences within the one or more documents includes determining boundaries of the identified sentences based, at least in part, on punctuation near the identified sentences in the one or more documents (C.60 lines 41-44-inherent to sentence endings/paragraph endings in document).

As per **claim 13**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches:

trimming at least one of the sentence endings by dropping one or more words from the at least one sentence ending (C.60 lines 41-44-his cutting to a phrase completion from sentence require the dropping, the Examiner notes, before the completion sentence can be cut, the completion must be determined, and then the one or more words removed-see snippet discussion below, C.57 lines 60-62, see also C.60 lines 45-57-his snippets from the sentences).

As per **claims 14 and 16**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 13. Shanahan further teaches where the one or more words are dropped from the at least one sentence ending based, at least in part, on at least one of text or one or more symbols included in the at least

one sentence ending (C.60 lines 25-35-his auto-completion results based on context of sentence, out of context ending deleted, Fig. 47 item 4722 and Fig. 48 his context, C.57 lines 60-62-his symbols comprising the ignored word).

As per **claim 15**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 14. Shanahan further teaches further comprising:

generating an inverse document frequency table that includes words common to sentence endings (C.57 lines 54-64); and

where the trimming at least one of the sentence endings includes:

comparing the text of the at least one sentence ending to words in the inverse document frequency table (ibid), and

dropping one or more words from the at least one sentence ending based, at least in part, on a result of the comparison (ibid-his “ignored” auto-completion word/phrase based on Zipf’s law).

As per **claim 17**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches claim 1 further comprising:

merging two or more of the sentence endings into a merged sentence ending (C.56 lines 50-52-his indexing of document sentence endings).

As per **claim 18**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 17. Shanahan further teaches where the merging two or more of the sentence endings includes:

identifying two or more of the sentence endings that have text in common, and merging the identified sentence endings (C.56 lines 50-52-his indexing of document sentence endings, common text are not duplicated, they are merged and indexed).

As per **claim 19** Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches claim 1 further comprising:

determining quality ones of the sentence endings based, at least in part, on at least one of a table of common beginnings of sentences and a table of common endings of sentences (C.55 lines 23-33-his high confidence completion, as a table of quality of endings based on the beginnings).

As per **claim 21**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan lacks where assigning the scores to the sentences endings is further based, at least in part on a measure of popularity associated with each of the sentence endings.

However, Fernley teaches the lacking limitation, assigning... measure of popularity associated with each of the sentence endings ([0055]-his document keywords, Fig. 2-his "nodes representing documents" and weights, [0047]-number of times of occurrence of document keywords-comprising sentence endings).

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences, providing the benefit of frequency analysis for information retrieval (Fernley, [0006, 0068]-his TF/IDF and relevancy rating).

As per **claim 22**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan lacks explicitly teaching where the measure of popularity associated with the sentence endings is based, at least in part, on a number of times that the sentence endings occur within the one or more documents (C.58 lines 21-24).

However, Fernley teaches the lacking limitation, assigning... measure of popularity associated with each of the sentence endings...one or more documents ([0055]-his document keywords, Fig. 2-his "nodes representing

documents" and weights, [0047]-number of times of occurrence of document keywords-comprising sentence endings).

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences, providing the benefit of frequency analysis for information retrieval (Fernley, [0006, 0068]-his TF/IDF and relevancy rating).

As per **claim 24**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan's teaching further comprising: adjusting the scores of the sentence endings based, at least in part, on lengths of the sentence endings (C.57 line 66).

As per **claim 25**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan's teaching further comprising:

adjusting the scores of the sentence endings based, at least in part, on whether at least a portion of the sentence endings are included in a list of bad endings (C.59 lines 25-35, C.55 lines 23-25-database sentence endings scores adjusted based on rank, the lower the rank, interpreted as the list of bad endings, i.e. his "most appropriate endings").

As per **claim 26**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan teaches further comprising: discarding one or more of the sentence endings when at least a portion of the one or more endings is included in a list of bad endings (ibid, C.55 lines 23-25, C.59 lines 25-35, wherein the endings not included in the “most appropriate endings” are discarded, and not presented to the user).

As per **claim 27**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the presenting the sentence endings includes:

ordering the sentence endings based, at least in part, on the scores (C.55 lines 23-30); and

presenting the ordered sentence endings as potential completions for the text fragment (ibid, his ranked list).

However, Fernley teaches “the scores” (see claim 1). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences, providing the benefit ranking for information retrieval (Fernley, [0068]).

As per **claim 28**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the presenting the sentence endings includes:

providing the sentence endings via a pop-up window (C.55 lines 24-25-his presented list, Fig. 47).

As per **claim 29**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 1. Shanahan further teaches where the presenting the sentence endings includes:

inserting on one of the sentence endings near a location of the text fragment (C.59 lines 35-43, and replacing the one of the sentence endings with a subsequent one or more of the sentence endings (C.59 lines 44, 45-his repeated auto-completion process).

As per **claim 30**, Shanahan teaches a system comprising:

means for receiving a text fragment (see claim 1);

means for identifying documents that include the text fragment (see claim 1 ;

means for locating sentences within the documents that include at least some of the text fragment (see claim 1, C.55 lines 60-65, C.60 lines 45-55);

means for identifying sentence endings associated with the located sentences (ibid, see claim 1);

means for presenting the sentence endings as potential completions for the text fragment (see claim 1).

Shanahan lacks explicitly teaching means for assigning scores to the sentence endings based, at least in part, on a measure of popularity associated with the sentence endings; and presenting the sentence endings as potential completions for the text fragment based, at least in part, on the scores.

However, Fernley teaches the above underlined, popularity..., based, at least in part on the scores ([0055]-his document keywords, Fig. 2-his "nodes representing documents" and weights, [0047]-number of times of occurrence of document keywords-comprising sentence endings).

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences, providing the benefit of frequency analysis for information retrieval (Fernley, [0006, 0068]-his TF/IDF and relevancy rating).

As per **claim 31**, Shanahan teaches comprising:

one or more servers configured to (fig. 2 his “network file server/network):

receive a text fragment (see claim 30),

identify documents that include at least a portion of the text fragment (see claim 30),

located sentences within the document that are associated with the text fragment (see claim 30), and

determine sentence completions associated with the located sentences (see claim 30).

trim one of the sentence completions by dropping one or more words from one of the sentence completions (C.60 lines 41-44-his cutting to a phrase completion from sentence require the dropping, the Examiner notes, before the completion sentence can be cut, the completion must be determined, and then the one or more words removed-see snippet discussion below, C.57 lines 60-62, see also C.60 lines 45-57-his snippets from the sentences).

provide a plurality of sentence completions including the trimmed sentence completion as potential completions for the text fragment (ibid, Fig. 46 item 4612).

As per **claim 32**, Shanahan teaches the system of claim 31, wherein the one or more servers include a plurality of servers (Fig. 2 items 200, 221, his multiple servers, Fig. 5).

As per **claim 43**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the system of claim 31 Shanahan lacks teaching where the one or more servers are further configured to assign scores to the plurality of the sentence completions based, at least in part, on a measure of popularity associated with the plurality of the sentence completions or a location within the located sentences at which the text fragment occurs.

However, Fernley teaches assigning scores to the plurality of the sentence completions based, at least in part, on a location within the located sentences at which the text fragment occurs (Fig. 2-his nodes representing Query, and nodes representing Documents, and rankings, see also [0056, 0068, 0075, 0076] wherein Fernley explicitly teaches scoring the sentences, based upon location of the text fragment relative to position within the sentence, and each word in the document is given a score based on relative position). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the combination of Veale with Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences,

providing the benefit of positional analysis for information retrieval (Fernley, [0068]).

5. Claim 41 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shanahan in view of Veale (US 6,584,470).

As per **claim 41**, Shanahan teaches a computer device, comprising:
a memory configured to store instructions (see claim 34); and
a processor configured to execute the instructions in the memory to:
obtain a fragment of text (see claim 34),
search for documents that include at least a portion of the fragment of text (see claim 34, C.56 lines 55-63),
identify sentences within the documents that include the at least the portion of the fragment of text (ibid),
determine sentence completions as text located within with the identified sentences between the at least the portion of the text fragment of text and an end of the identified sentences (ibid), and
provide a plurality of the sentence completions (ibid, Fig. 46 item 4612) as potential completions for the fragment of text (ibid-his auto-completion suggestions, see claim 34).

Shanahan lacks teaching to, merge at least two of the sentence completions to form a single merged sentence completion, provide a plurality of the sentence completions, including the merged sentence completion as potential completions for the fragment of text.

However, Veale teaches merging at least two of the sentence completions to form a single merged sentence completion, provide a plurality of the sentence completions, including the merged sentence completion as potential completions for the fragment of text (C.21 line 35-C.22 line 7-his merging two sentence completions to form one complete sentence ending). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify Shanahan's completion suggestions with Veale's merged completion suggestions, providing the benefit of providing a composite answer if required (Veale, *ibid*).

6. Claim 44 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shanahan in view of Veale (US 6,584,470), as applied to claim 41 above, and further in view of Fernley.

As per **claim 44**, Shanahan and Veale make obvious the system of claim 41, but the combination lacks teaching where the one or more

servers are further configured to assign scores to the plurality of the sentence completions based, at least in part, on a measure of popularity associated with the plurality of the sentence completions or a location within the located sentences at which the text fragment occurs.

However, Fernley teaches assigning scores to the plurality of the sentence completions based, at least in part, on a location within the located sentences at which the text fragment occurs (Fig. 2-his nodes representing Query, and nodes representing Documents, and rankings, see also [0056, 0068, 0075, 0076] wherein Fernley explicitly teaches scoring the sentences, based upon location of the text fragment relative to position within the sentence, and each word in the document is given a score based on relative position). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the combination of Veale with Shanahan's sentence endings with Fernley's scored sentences, providing the benefit of positional analysis for information retrieval (Fernley, [0068]).

7. Claims 9-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Shanahan in view of Fernley, as applied to claim 7 above, and further in view of Risvik et al. (Risvik, US 6,377,945).

As per **claim 9**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 7, but the combination lacks explicitly teaching where the shortening the text fragment includes dropping one or more words from a beginning or end of the text fragment. However, Risvik teaches wherein the shortening the text fragment includes dropping one or more words from a beginning or end of the text fragment (C.10 lines 32-41-his deleting start word).

Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the combination of Fernley and Shanahan with Risvik's possible word start sequence search providing the benefit of limiting search to only possible matches.

As per **claim 10**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 7, but the combination lacks explicitly teaching where shortening the text fragment includes:

identifying one or more symbols within the text fragment; and
dropping one or more words from the text fragment based, at least in part, on the one or more identified symbols. However Risvik teaches identifying one or more symbols within the text fragment; and dropping one or more words from the text fragment based, at least in part, on the one or more identified symbols (C.10 lines 32-41). Therefore, at the time of the

invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the combination of Fernley and Shanahan with Risvik's word deletion providing the benefit of limiting search to only possible matches.

As per **claim 11**, Shanahan and Fernley make obvious the method of claim 7, but the combination lacks explicitly teaching where the shortening the text fragment includes:

analyzing a structure of the text fragment; and

dropping one or more words from the text fragment based, at least in part, on the analysis.

However Risvik teaches analyzing a structure..., dropping one ...based, at least in part, on the analysis (C.8 lines 53-67, C.10 lines 32-41, abstract). Therefore, at the time of the invention, it would have been obvious to one ordinarily skilled in the art to modify the combination of Fernley and Shanahan with Risvik's word deletion providing the benefit of limiting search to only possible matches.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

- Ando (US 6,775,677) teaches merging sentences.

- Childs et al. (US 6,375,242) teaches pattern matching and sentence searching.
- Ariai et al. (US 6,173,261) teaches merging sentence endings.
- Kupiec (US 5,519,608) teaches sentence completion, fragment matching, ranking scoring and presentation of the sentences.
- Crooks et al. (US 2004/0078366) teaches scoring matches based on location of a fragment relative to sentence ending.

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory

period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to LAMONT M. SPOONER whose telephone number is (571)272-7613. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:00 AM - 5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Patrick Edouard can be reached on 571/272-7603. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

lms
4/4/08

/Patrick N. Edouard/
Supervisory Patent Examiner, Art Unit 2626